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U.S. Application No. 09/923,320 Examiner MARTIN Art Unit 2154
Submission of Amendment with RCE in Response to June 28, 2005 Final Office Action

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of an online user, the method comprising the steps of:

monitoring the number of users who log in to a website;

as each user logs in, comparing notification criteria of the offline user, the notification criteria specifying a particular number of users that logs in to the website; and

when the particular number of users exceeds a preset amount ~~logs in to the website, then~~ sending a notification to the offline user, the notification informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the website that the particular user has logged in to the website, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user.

2. (Cancel)

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is a chat room and the notification criteria further comprise a topic of discussion ~~at least one of~~

~~a number of users logged into the chat room, and~~

~~a request that the offline user log into the chat room, wherein the request is sent by a user logged into the chat room.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is a game site and the notification criteria further comprise when a high score has been exceeded ~~at least one of:~~

~~a number of users logged into the game site, and~~

~~a request that the offline user log into the game site, wherein the request is sent by a user logged into the game site.~~

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5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise entry of a bid that exceeds a high bid submitted by the offline user.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise a number of bids submitted within a certain duration.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising reporting the indication to another offline user.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising ~~at least one of storing contact information of the offline user, retrieving the contact information of the offline user, and sending an~~ the offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the contact information comprises a communication device type and an address of the communication device.
10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the contact information comprises a plurality of communication device types of the offline user, addresses for each of the plurality of communication device types, and an order in which to attempt the plurality of communication device types.
11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone, a wireless telephone, a caller identification device, a wireless access protocol device, a one-way pager, and an interactive pager.
12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

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receiving an indication from the offline user as to whether the offline user will log in to the website; and
reporting the indication to the online user.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone and a wireless telephone,
wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user through an interactive voice response unit, and
wherein the step of reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through a global computer network.
14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving audio input of the offline user and converting the audio input to text for transmission through the global computer network to the online user.
15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving audio input of the offline user, recording the audio input as a digital audio file, and transmitting the digital audio file through the global computer network to the online user.
16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of an interactive pager and a wireless access protocol device,
wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user from the interactive pager or the wireless access protocol device, and
wherein the step of reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through the global computer network.

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17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the input comprises one of a standard message and a customized message.
18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the notification comprises the notification criteria and a time and a date that the notification criteria was satisfied.
19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of requiring the offline user to provide a passcode before forwarding the offline communication.
20. (Currently Amended) A computer providing notification of an online interaction occurring on a global computer network, the computer performing the steps of:

monitoring the number of users who log in to a website;
as each user logs in, comparing notification criteria of an offline user, the notification criteria specifying a particular number of users that logs in to the website; and
when the particular number of users exceeds a preset amount logs in to the website, then sending a notification to the offline user, the notification informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the website that the particular user has logged in to the website, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user.
21. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 20, wherein the website is a chat room and the notification criteria further comprise a topic of discussion at least one of i) a number of users logged into the chat room and ii) a request that the offline user log into the chat room, wherein the request is sent by a user logged into the chat room.
22. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 20, wherein the website is a game site and the notification criteria further comprise when a high score has been exceeded at least one of i) a number of users logged into the game site and ii) a request that the offline user log into the game site, wherein the request is sent by a user logged into the game site.

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23. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 20, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise entry of a bid that exceeds a high bid submitted by the offline user.
24. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 20, wherein the computer further performs ~~at least one of the following steps: i) storing contact information of the offline user, ii) retrieving the contact information of the offline user, and iii) the step of sending an~~ the offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
25. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 24, wherein the contact information comprises a communication device type and an address of the communication device.
26. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 24, wherein the contact information comprises a plurality of communication device types of the offline user, addresses for each of the plurality of communication device types, and an order in which to attempt the plurality of communication device types.
27. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 24, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone, a wireless telephone, a caller identification device, a wireless access protocol device, a one-way pager, and an interactive pager.
28. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 20, wherein the computer further performs the following steps:

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will log in to the website;
and
reporting the indication to the an online user.

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29. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 24, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone and a wireless telephone,
wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user through an interactive voice response unit, and
wherein the step of reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through a global computer network.
30. (Currently Amended) A system providing notification of an online interaction occurring on a global computer network, the system performing the steps of:

monitoring the number of users who log in to a website;
as each user logs in, comparing notification criteria of an offline user, the notification criteria specifying a particular number of users that logs in to the website; and
when the particular number of users exceeds a preset amount logs in to the website, then sending an offline communication to the offline user, the offline communication notifying the offline user of an amount of activity in the website that the particular user has logged in to the website.
31. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the website is a chat room and the notification criteria further comprise a topic of discussion at least one of i) a number of users logged into the chat room and ii) a request that the offline user log into the chat room, wherein the request is sent by a user logged into the chat room.
32. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the website is a game site and the notification criteria further comprise when a high score has been exceeded at least one of i) a number of users logged into the game site and ii) a request that the offline user log into the game site, wherein the request is sent by a user logged into the game site.

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33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 30, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise entry of a bid that exceeds a high bid submitted by the offline user.
34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the system further performs at ~~least one of the following steps: i) storing contact information of the offline user, ii) retrieving the contact information of the offline user, and iii) the step of sending an~~ the offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the contact information comprises a communication device type and an address of the communication device.
36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the contact information comprises a plurality of communication device types of the offline user, addresses for each of the plurality of communication device types, and an order in which to attempt the plurality of communication device types.
37. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone, a wireless telephone, a caller identification device, a wireless access protocol device, a one-way pager, and an interactive pager.
38. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the system further performs the following steps:

receiving an indication from the offline user as to whether the offline user will log in to the website; and
reporting the indication to ~~an~~ the online user.

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39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 38, wherein the step of sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone and a wireless telephone,
wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user through an interactive voice response unit, and
wherein the step of reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through a global computer network.
40. (Currently Amended) A system for notifying an offline user of an online interaction, the system comprising:
 - (a) a means for retrieving notification criteria of the offline user, the notification criteria specifying a particular number of users that logs in to a website;
 - (b) a means for monitoring the number of users who log in to the website;
 - (c) a means for comparing the number of logged in users to the notification criteria;
and
 - (d) a means for sending a notification that the particular number of users has logged in to the website exceeds a preset amount, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user and informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the website.
41. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 40, wherein the website is one of a chat room, a game site, and an auction.
42. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of an interaction in which the offline user could participate, wherein the interaction occurs on a website, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving conditions under which to notify the offline user, the conditions specifying a particular number of users that logs in to the website;

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monitoring the number users who log in to the website;
comparing the number of logged in users to a preset amount ~~the conditions~~; and
if the number of logged in users exceeds the preset amount ~~activities satisfy the conditions, then~~ sending a notification to the offline user informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the website ~~that the particular user has logged in to the website, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user.~~

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the website is one of a chat site, a game site, and an auction site.
44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 42, further comprising the step of at least one of the following steps: i) storing contact information of the offline user, ii) retrieving the contact information of the offline user, and iii) sending an the offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 42, wherein when the website is a game site, then sending the notification when a high score has been exceeded ~~the conditions further comprise one of:~~

~~when the number of users logged into the site exceed a preset amount, and
when a user logged into the site requests that the offline user log into the site.~~

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the offline communication is one of a wireline telephone call, a wireless telephone call, a message sent to a caller identification device, a message sent to a wireless access protocol device, a message sent to a one-way pager, and a message sent to an interactive pager.
47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will join the interaction; and

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reporting the indication to users logged into the website.

48. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of an interaction in which the offline user could participate, wherein the interaction occurs on an instant messaging service, the method comprising the steps of:

~~associating a group of users with the offline user;~~

monitoring the number of ~~whether a particular users that~~ logs into the instant messaging service;

~~if the number of logged in users exceeds a predefined amount particular user logs into the instant messaging service, then sending a notification to the offline user informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the instant messaging service that the particular user has logged in to the instant messaging service, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user;~~

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will join the instant messaging service; and

reporting the indication to users logged into the instant messaging service.

49. (Cancel)

50. (Cancel)

51. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of activities occurring on an auction website, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving conditions under which to notify the offline user, the conditions specifying a number of users ~~a particular user~~ that logs in to the auction website;

monitoring the number of users who log in to the auction website;

comparing the logged in users to the conditions; and

if the activities satisfy the conditions, sending a notification to the offline user informing the offline user of a level of activity in the auction website ~~that the particular~~

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~~user has logged in to the auction website, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user.~~

52. (Original) The method of claim 51, wherein the conditions are one of:

when a bid is entered that exceeds a high bid of the offline user, and
when the number of bids entered with a duration exceeds a preset amount.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising the steps of:

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will log onto the auction website; and
reporting the indication to a user logged into the auction website.

54. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of reporting a high bid from the offline user to users logged into the auction website.

55. (Previously Presented) A method for notifying a user of a call over a global computer network to the user, the method comprising the steps of:

monitoring for calls to a network address of the user; and
if a call from a calling party to the network address is unanswered, notifying the user of the unanswered call via an offline communication;
receiving an indication from the user as to whether the user will accept the call to the network address; and
reporting the indication to the calling party.

56. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein the offline communication is one of a wireline telephone call, a wireless telephone call, a message sent to a caller identification

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device, a message sent to a wireless access protocol device, a message sent to a one-way pager, and a message sent to an interactive pager.

57. (Cancel)